

FROM A MAN WHO KNOWS

By Mike Kemp

Mike Kemp was gracious enough to write this piece at my request. These are lessons he's learned from his own bitter experience, having been hit with a typical military-style home invasion and jailed on marijuana charges -- just weeks after helping to expose racist "fun and games" within the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms.

You've finished three long days' worth of work, you hit "control S" to save the last changes. Then you hear a terrible racket behind your house -- a helicopter!! And a cold chill races up your body, leaving an icy void in your stomach. It's happened... "they've come for you."

It's not a surprise. As the saying goes, it's dangerous to be right when it's the government that's wrong. And even so, you might get away with it, if you have kept your opinions to yourself. But no, halfwit, YOU had to go flap your jaws in public, and get your pitcher in the paper. And on tv, too, for that matter, and talked and have been talked about on the radio, to boot. Now you find out what it means to be noticed.

There it is, really. If you want to bitch, you can even get away with that, gen'rally. Just don't bitch too loud, or too good. It is effectiveness that attracts attention-- if you actually make an impact, prepare for reprisal in direct proportion to the effectiveness of your activities. Anyhow, I digress. The king's men are here to do you ill. Think, boy, THINK!

Well, it ISN'T a surprise. You have made your preparations. Short of a mine field and trip wires and hard points for defense, there's not much hope of mounting a serious holding action. After all, not everyone has a big'ol building with apartments, water tank and chapel and room for a hundred souls-- like Mt. Carmel-- with armored gun turrets on the corners, and armored refuge for the noncombatants, and command detonated mines down the front drive, and rocket-launched fouling cables for anti-helicopter use... they didn't have that? Oh...

Anyway, you've done what you can. You live alone, so you don't have to worry about others. You've put heavy wire mesh behind the screens to stop smoke or flash-bang or... and you have metal water buckets loaded with bleach for any smokers that do get in, a mask and filters, many gallons of water, you've got some fuel and a little stove, so you can heat water and you've got plenty of rice and beans. There's a cheap and reliable Chinese semiauto and two big cans of ammo.

Make up your mind, boy. Are you gonna go to jail and be paraded like a common thug? And you are a most uncommon thug. You are a thug who has pissed on the king's shoes. Or embarrassed him. Or been unlucky enough to be useful for the king's own purposes. So what will it be? Jail and humiliation? Or hole up?

What does "hole up" mean? It means plenty of the same humiliation, as any such "standoff" attracts media as watermelon does yellow jackets. Your neighborhood will be cordoned off, police and flashing lights and news trucks. You will measure every ounce of water and conserve every drop. You will eat the same thing every day. You will live in constant fear of the house burning around your ears. Or twenty ninjas swarming into your house when they think you are asleep-- and you may be.

You will have to guard against listening devices inserted through your walls. About thermal imaging for locating you, tracking your movements, your activities, your habits. You must learn to conceal your location behind massive or interfering objects-- waterbeds, beds, corners with furniture, use of thermal "space blankets"-- and sleep when you can while producing signs of a faux routine.

What if they just go ahead and bust in? That's gonna happen in the next thirty seconds, or it won't happen. What are you going to do? If there's an assault, chances are you're gonna get dead -- if you resist. And it's right now. You have to decide, and decide right now, and whichever decision you make is permanent. Resist, and you will die or rot in prison or perhaps be executed. Regardless, life as you know it is over. And death isn't pretty or glorious or romantic. It's ugly and messy and usually painful and always... final.

On the other hand, if you surrender, much will be made of your "preparations." You will be demonized in every fashion available to the powers which want you destroyed, and kangaroo court with whimsical and absolutely irrational decisions will decide your fate. Your defense will finish you financially. Its success is at best problematic. Much depends upon the perceived horribleness of your disregard for some rule or regulation set forth by the king-- thou shalt not garden this plant. Thou shalt not have guns that are too short... or too long... or that shoot too fast... or hold too many rounds. Thou shalt not have stuff to make explosives. Don't bother me with the details that common household products are typically capable of doing that. That just lets me charge whomever I please. Thou shall bribe me every year so that I not send armed goons to steal your property and hold you for ransom.

You'll be Jack the Ripper before you know it, and jail ain't fun. If you truly understand and accept the idea of bullets -- probably LOTS of bullets boring holes through your body, of asphyxiating in poisonous gas or smoke from your burning home, of your dead and inglorious corpse -- read on.

With only one of you and most likely two doors at least for entry, you must be prepared to instantly retreat to a position which must be approached from only one direction. You have to do it NOW. If at the same time, you could also make sure that your firearm, ammo, gas mask and filters are with you, that would be appropriate. It wouldn't hurt to have previously prepared that location with a bare minimum of a day's water. Some munchies would be nice.

Well, 30 seconds have passed, and no assault. You've heard them beating on the door, heard the bull horn, heard them milling about, but no assault. I guess that they decided that more manpower and propaganda were needed. So now would be a good time to fill every available receptacle with water. Like the bath tubs and everything else that will hold water. Get ready for a siege to the limits of your endurance. Make any phone calls that you need to make. Get ready to rig tripwires and noisemakers to give you a few seconds warning if there is an assault while you are sleeping. Get ready to live without electricity, without telephone, without running water. If you surrender, things will be made very, very bad on you.

If there is an assault, it doesn't necessarily mean gunfire. Lynn Crawford ran two agents out at the point of a shotgun. He fired no shots, though police had shot and killed his dog. He eventually surrendered. He will likely spend most of the rest of his life locked up, and his home was ransacked.

If there is an assault... chances are there will be gunfire. You may kill someone, or more than one. Do not forget that your neighbors are at risk from your outgoing rounds. You may well be wounded. If you break the initial assault, you have dead or wounded in your house. They're going to want to extract them. If you are wounded, this is dangerous for you, more dangerous the more seriously you are wounded. If you are weakened, you are more easily overwhelmed. If you are, you may be summarily killed... or "saved" for jail and perhaps execution. The Branch Davidians passed up a wonderful opportunity when they allowed ATF to extract their wounded. But corpses in the house eventually smell.

There are serious issues involved here. The power of the state is fearsome and essentially unlimited. If your insistence upon living free so irritates the government that you are to be made example of, you must consider the options. Jail is real. It is debilitating, the path to jail and the time spent in it are devastating, financially. You will lose friends, and people will shun you. But, eventually, you will again be out of jail.

On the other hand, if you choose to resist, the end will likely not make any difference in the larger scheme. Too many have died, too many have been sacrificed with little appreciable impact. Martyrdom is a lonely calling. But... though you may starve and

freeze under siege, though you may die alone, in pain, it is your decision to make. Make it with full knowledge of the reality and the consequences of it. Then satisfy yourself. Jail is a terrible place... and so is the grave.

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